

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07

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L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 022003Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2200

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 0478

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:SHUM, ELAB, PA

SUBJ: ARREST OF CHRISTIAN TRADE UNIONISTS

REF: ASUNCION 72

1. JUDGE BERNABE VALDEZ MARTINEZ HAS WITHDRAWN FROM THE CASES OF THE CHRISTIAN TRADE UNIONISTS AND RURAL ACTIVISTS WHO WERE ARRESTED DECEMBER 17-18. HE REPORTEDLY WITHDREW BECAUSE OF THE PRESSURES THE CASE HAS GENERATED. WE ARE TOLD HE IS REFERRING TO PRESSURES FROM THE POLICE TO UPHOLD THEIR CHARGES AGAINST THE ACCUSED DESPITE PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY THE LABOR MINISTER AND PRIVATE STATEMENTS BY OTHERS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO EVIDENCE AGAINST THESE PEOPLE.

2. JUDGE CARLOS BAEZ REHNFELDT HAS BEEN NAMED TO TAKE OVER THESE CASES AND THE JUDICIAL PROCESS WILL BEGIN AS SCHEDULED THE AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 2 WITH THE FIRST DECLARATION OF ARGENTINE CLAT OFFICIAL EMILIO
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VALENTI NATALE. JUDGE BAEZ REHNFELDT HAS BEEN A JUDGE FOR LESS THAN A YEAR AND HAS BEEN DESCRIBED BY JUDGE VALDEZ AS A JUDGE WHO IS INCLINED TO DECIDE CASES ON THE BASIS OF WHAT HE BELIEVES THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH WANTS THE OUTCOME TO BE. FURTHER COMMENTS ON JUDGE BAEZ' JUDICIAL QUALITIES CAN BE FOUND ON PAGES 48, 49, AND 50 OF THE HELFELD-STEPHANSKY ILHR REPORT ON PARAGUAY.

WHITE

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Message Attributes

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